New Albany Ind May 4th 1846

Dear Brethren

Your letter of Oct last was duly received. On account of the absence of the Cor Sec'y at the time, & since his return, the letter having been mislaid a longer than usual delay in answering it occurred Pardon the delay & we will try to make amends in future. We realize, with yourselves, the importance of that free & affectionate intercourse which should characterize the professors of Jesus, & especially those who having devoted themselves exclusively to the service of Christ are preparing for the highest & most responsible office in his Church. A union of interests, sentiment, & feeling is necessary to the furtherance of any great work, but how much more with those who are to labor for the glory of God, in the salvation of souls? Such union is to a very great extent the secret of success; & how shall it be made more perfect & durable, than by an exchange of views & feelings, even before entering upon the work to which we are aspiring? What though we cultivate different portions of the great moral vineyard, far seperated from eachother will it not be a source of satisfaction to remember that we have taken sweet counsel together? & will it not prove an incentive to duty & a solace in the hour of trial & difficulty, for each one to know that others have pledged an interest in his welfare & success? And above all: will it not be a matter of rejoicing, when we shall stand at last before Him whom we have served upon earth to recognize in eachother those who to some extent have contributed toward making us what by the grace of God we then shall be? Let our correspondence then continue, & may it be the means of strengthening an attachment to eachother & to the kingdom of Christ, which, unbroken by the vicissitudes of time, shall be perfected in Eternity

Brethren, we are preparing to embark in a great & glorious enterprise none other has connected with it responsibility so weighty & solemn—

no other- is attended with like difficultys & trials. While preparing for the ministry it is impossible to acquaint ourselves fully with these responsi=bilitys, & difficultys. Experience alone can present them in their true light. And knowing this, what diligence, what watchfulness & prayer should now be exercised, that our entrance upon these solemn duties may not find us unpre=pared. We have enlisted under the banner of Christ, who is the Captain of our salvation- It is his work, & if we are ever made sufficient for these things we must become strong in the Lord- if victorious, the victory must be through our Lord Jesus Christ. If called to this work, now is the time for girding our=selves, & putting on the whole armor. And we may be assured that every proper ef=fort for this will be prospered by the blessing of him who hath called us.

We need an acquaintance with the interests of the Church & with the condition & wants of the world. But, first of all we must have ardent, heart-felt piety- a close walk with God- that self-consecration to his service & that zeal for his glory which will prompt the inquiry; What is there to be done? Lord, what will thou have me to do? Let our hearts be kept right- let us love God & the souls of men. Then will our sympathys flow out toward them that are ready to perish & our efforts be put forth to save them. We are not called on for a lifeless service but for one of vigorous, constant activity- we are to "spend & be spent" for Christ- presenting ourselves a "living sacrifice"- consecrating every power of mind, body affection of the heart; & without this every other qualification will be useless-

Such men the Church now needs; & when we hear her through her Boards demand=ing "hosts of men, full of faith & the Holy Ghost- men of boldness & self-denial" to cultivate the moral deserts of our own, & foreign lands, we realize the truth of the declaration: "The harvest truly is great; but the laborers are few."

We were visited a few days ago by the Rev. Mr Morrison who expects soon to return to the mission in Northern India. Our interview with him was to ourselves interesting & profitable. He laid before us the claims of the foreign field, in such a manner, as that we feel more than ever the importance of vigorous effort in behalf of the heathen. None of our present class however have felt it their duty to devote themselves to foreign missions. The destitutions in the west

seem to present a stronger claim for their services, & situations are offered even before the expiration of their course of study. There are many vacant churches in our very midst, & a little farther west the richest fields are opening & promising an abundant reward to the laborer. These fields will be occupied if not by ourselves by our enemys; & too often while the church delays for want of men, errorists who are ever on the alert creep in, spreading a moral blight over the face of society.

You ask for information respecting the state of religion & the destitutions in different parts of the west. The plan adopted by our society some time since for gaining accurate information on these subjects has not been fully carried out; so that what we might now present you would be but little more than a repetition of what is contained in the public prints of the west We refer you therefore to the records of our Presbyterys as given in the "Presbyterian of the West" & the "Presbyterian Herald" the former published at Cincinnatti, the latter at Louisville. Besides churches without pastors, there are many places, where churches might now be organized, & large districts of country thickly settled with presbyterians & others, among whom Evangelists might labor with success. & Many of our Presbyterys are calling loudly for such laborers. There are motives strongly urging you to assist us in cultivating these moral wastes: for the destitutions are, in part at least, among those who have come from your midst — your neighbours & it may be your friends & relatives — to find a home in the west. These families & communities are daily urging their request for the means of grace, & if no provision is made for them it may be expected, that many of them will mingle again with the world & their Children be permitted to grow up without the restraining influences of the gospel.

Many of our Presbyterys have found the employment of Colporteurs profitable & they have done much in this way towards supplying the destitute with religious tracts & books — especially the valuable publications of our Board, which have been in many instances the means of reclaiming backsliders & awakening the careless. And it is through this agency to a very great extent, in its direct influences, that these long neglected & destitutions are becoming prepared for the living ministry.

It is important for those who are expecting to labor in the west to know that there is before them

a life of toil & strife. Not only have they to preach Christ crucified: but error in her thousand forms must be met, & those who expect to stand forth as actors in the drama should be well prepared. The contest here is not between Greek & Greeks but between Christ & the devil. Nothing is left untried by the evil one to prevent the proper effects of Truth upon the hearts & consciences of men. But on the other hand every measure is adopted that is calculated to poison the mind & spread the darkness of spiritual death over the face of society. Hardly an error can be mentioned which has not its advocates amongst us. With these facts before the minds of the students in our Theological Seminary, the path of duty is plain.

Society of Inquiry.
Theological Seminary.
Princeton.
N.J.

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NEW ALBANY MAY 5 Ind.

Rev. Dr. Hall

In regard to our Seminary there is nothing of much interest. The number of students is smaller than last year, being now about twenty. An increase expected next session. The state of religious feeling amongst us is not what it should be; & yet it would be far from truth to say that piety is at a low stage. Our prayer meetings are well attended & though we are few in number, these times of communion with each other, & with our divine Master are felt to be profitable & often precious seasons to our souls. Expecting to hear from you soon I subscribe myself,

In behalf of the Society of Inquiry, your brother in Christ

Francis P. Monfort, Assist. Cor. Sec'y.